

Message Text

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41

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-11 DHA-02 ORM-02 SCA-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 VO-03 /075 W

----- 044077

P 041224Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7752

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2391

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: REFUGEE BOAT ARRIVALS FROM VIETNAM

REF: A. BANGKOK 1533 B. BANGKOK 1473 C. BANGKOK 1471

D. BANGKOK 1973

1. SINCE LATE NOVEMBER, THE EMBASSY HAS MONITORED THE ARRIVAL IN THAI WATERS OF EIGHT SMALL BOATS CARRYING REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM. EACH VESSEL HAS CARRIED APPROXIMATELY FOUR FAMILIES (AN AVERAGE OF 15 PERSONS). BEYOND THE EIGHT BOATS WE KNOW OF, THERE APPEAR TO BE OTHERS.

2. THE EMBASSY HAS REASON TO BELIEVE, BASED ON CONVERSATIONS WITH UNHCR, THAT "MANY" UNREPORTED SMALL BOATS REGULARLY TRANSPORT PASSENGERS FROM VIETNAM TO THAILAND; THEY DISCHARGE THEIR PASSENGERS AT ISOLATED SPOTS WHERE THEY ESCAPE THAI IMMIGRATION OR POLICE DETECTION. THERE IS NO FORMAL ALERT SYSTEM FOR BOAT ARRIVALS; GENERALLY, WE HEAR ABOUT ARRIVALS FROM THE UNHCR AND SOMETIMES THE RTG. REFUGEES CAUGHT ARRIVING BY BOAT ARE DETAINED BY THE RTG AND ARRESTED AS ILLEGAL ALIENS. WE ATTEMPT TO INTERVIEW AND SCREEN THE REFUGEES TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY FOR PAROLE TO THE US AS IN CASES CITED REFTELS.

3. THE RTG MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, UNHCR, AND THE EMBASSY ARE
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WORKING TOWARD CLOSER COORDINATION TO EFFECT AN "ALERT SYSTEM"

SO THAT PASSENGERS ON EACH DETECTED ARRIVING VESSEL
CAN BE QUERIED AS TO WHETHER OR NOT BLOOD RELATIVES ARE LIVING
IN A "FREE WORLD" COUNTRY.

4. THE EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE FULL KNOWLEDGE AS TO HOW THE
"SYSTEM" IN VIETNAM OPERATES. THERE APPEARS TO AN "UNDER-
GROUND RAILROAD" THAT FOR A CONSIDERABLE SUM (APPROXIMATELY
THE EQUIVALENT OF 1 KILOGRAM OF GOLD PER PERSON) SMUGGLES
THE REFUGEE OUT OF A SOUTHERNPOINT IN VIETNMAN.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 04 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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